

Frontline



U.S. Customs and Border Protection ★ Vol 6, Issue 3

**CBP Raises
the Stakes in
South
Texas**

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photo by Donna Burton



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★ Office of Air and Marine Pilot Robert Smith goes through his pre-flight checks at McAllen Air Branch.



photo by Donna Burton



★ A Border Patrol agent performs a safe-boat landing as part of his patrol on the Rio Grande River in South Texas.



photo by Donna Burton

★ Border Patrol agents from the McAllen station horse patrol unit on horseback patrol in South Texas.



photo by Donna Burton



★ Border Patrol agents patrol the Rio Grande River along the U.S.-Mexico border in an air boat.

photo by Donna Burton



photo by Donna Burton

★ A CBP officer and his canine partner inspect inbound vehicles at the Juarez Lincoln Bridge port of entry in Laredo, Texas.



photo by Donna Burton

★ A Border Patrol agent patrols the South Texas border on an all-terrain vehicle.

photo by JDonna Burton

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Confiscated Corals

CBP seeking a new home for 31 crates of coral



photo provided by Nova Southeastern University

★ Coral seized at the Port of Tampa is displayed at Nova Southeastern University.



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission photo

★ Coral species grow slowly. These seized specimens were 6 to 8 years old when chopped off their reef.

Customs and Border Protection is looking for a good home for 31 boxes of confiscated corals. Several universities, including Florida Atlantic University, have expressed interest in the 2011 seizure, the largest shipment of corals ever intercepted by CBP Port of Tampa. The seizure contains thousands of coral specimens, many of them endangered species, but all broken from reefs in the Solomon Islands. Prized for its beauty by curio collector, and used for habitat in aquariums, coral has been seized three times at Tampa since 2010 for lack of import permits.

The first of the three shipments arrived in Tampa in August 2010, packed in a shipping container holding 22 large boxes. With an estimated value of \$94,426, the corals were seized by CBP and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The corals in the cargo violated the Endangered Species

Act and the Lacey Act, which prohibit the trade of fish and wildlife that has been illegally taken, transported or sold. The shipment also violated the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

The entire shipment was donated by CBP in June 2011 to Nova Southeastern University's Center of Excellence for Coral Ecosystems Research in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Research activities at the center include growing corals in a salt water nursery to prepare them for transplanting to ocean reefs.

As long as a demand exists for endangered corals, **illicit trade will continue.**

Working underwater with hammers and chisels, native divers in the Solomons had harvested the corals at depths between 25 to 60 feet, according to Kate Lunz, an associate research scientist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

An expert in coral reefs, Lunz has helped identify coral shipments arriving at the Port of Tampa. “There were 10 species of coral that were accurately declared, but 12 species of coral that were not declared. Quantities of some species were understated. We also found undeclared live corals in the shipment that were not given the time to dry before shipping, along with worms and crabs that lived in that part of the reef,” said Lunz.

Richard E. Dodge, dean of Nova’s oceanographic center, said the seized stony coral skeletons will be used for research, education and outreach. According to Dodge, a selection of corals will be put on display throughout the university and elsewhere to provide information on the importance of corals and coral reefs. Some of the smashed coral rubble received was used to build a walkway, with a sign describing the seizure and origin of the coral.

Nova also gave much of the seized coral to other researchers and institutions:

- Pensacola State College uses donated coral specimens to illustrate scientific concepts as well as marine conservation issues.
- Stanford University researchers use the donated coral skeletons to study ocean flows over coral reefs.
- University of Miami researchers are studying a tumor found on a coral taken in the seizure.
- Piper High School in Sunrise, Fla., uses donated coral specimens to teach marine science courses.

The National Aquarium in Baltimore, Md., used the coral as molds to produce artificial corals that are on display in a new exhibit called “Blacktip Reef.”

A smaller shipment of five boxes of corals was seized at the

Port of Tampa in March 2012 and donated to the National Aquarium in June 2013. The seizures were all destined for the same U.S. importer, according to Mary Ann Cranford, who serves as a CBP fines, penalties and forfeitures officer at the Port of Tampa. All shipments were manifested as coral, but were placed on hold by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service until the species could be identified and confirmed against import permits. Tampa CBP often seizes small amounts of coral arriving with tourists from the Caribbean Islands, according to Cranford. Seizures of large commercial quantities of coral are less frequent.

As long as a demand exists for endangered corals, illicit trade will continue, according to Andrew Rhyne, marine biology professor at Roger Williams University and a research scientist at the New England

Aquarium. The coral trade falls into three categories: dead corals, which are bought by collectors in the curio market; live corals, which are purchased for use in home aquariums; and ornamental corals, which are used in making jewelry. Most smuggling is in the trade of dead corals for the curio collectors, packed dry into containers.

“Until international treaties started protecting endangered corals 30 years ago, some reefs were strip mined by the curio industry. We’re talking about warehouse quantities of endangered corals,” said Rhyne. The current trade in corals is highly regulated, however, “the more pressure that can come through monitoring and law enforcement, the cleaner the trade. The pressure is really important,” said Rhyne. ■

—David Long

Seized stony coral skeletons will be used for research, education and outreach.



★ Attracted to the natural beauty of coral, visitors at the National Aquarium examine specimens donated from previous CBP seizures.

photo provided by National Aquarium

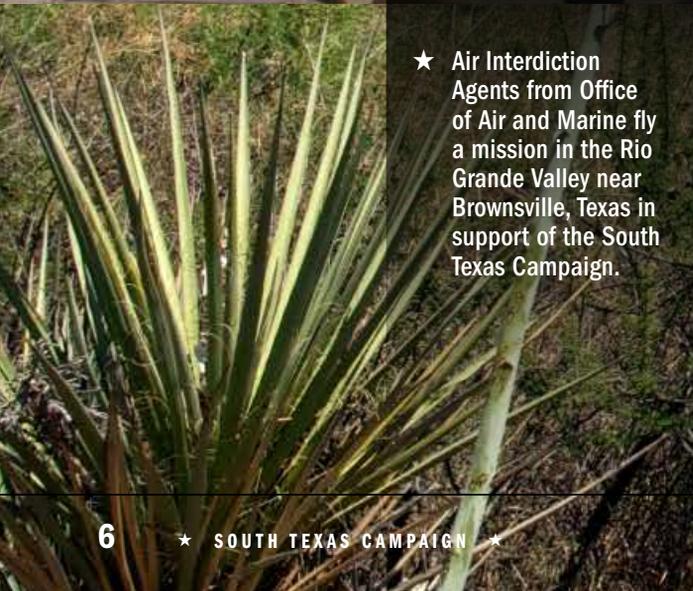
CBP Raises the Stakes in South Texas

CBP combats cartels through integrated intelligence-driven operations

BY RICK PAUZA



★ Special response agents and officers depart to serve a high-risk warrant.



★ Air Interdiction Agents from Office of Air and Marine fly a mission in the Rio Grande Valley near Brownsville, Texas in support of the South Texas Campaign.



Scouring the thorny desert scrub along the snaking ribbons of the Rio Grande River with helicopters, all-terrain vehicles and on foot, members of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection South Texas Campaign are disrupting transnational criminal organizations and degrading their ability to ply their illicit trade in South Texas.

★ CBP officers and Border Patrol agents count to verify a total of \$610,535 in unreported currency seized during an integrated outbound enforcement operation at the Brownsville port of entry in Texas.



“Historically, we have deployed our resources based on flow and we have totally changed our philosophy on that. We now deploy our resources based on threat and risk,” said CBP Commander Robert L. Harris, who leads the South Texas Campaign.

The South Texas area of operations encompasses a large swath of the U.S. covering 463,900 square miles, including 1,011 coastal border miles and 697 river border miles. Within CBP, the campaign

harnesses the Del Rio, Laredo, Rio Grande Valley and New Orleans Sectors and the Laredo and Houston Field Offices with a combined complement of approximately 10,000 CBP employees.

“We have four major operations right now to impact the four major transnational criminal organizations,” said Harris. “To date, we have targeted and arrested or prosecuted over 157 key cartel members and created an environment that degrades their ability to operate.”

CBP works closely with federal, state and local law enforcement partners and its Mexican counterparts on the intelligence that drives the South Texas Campaign’s enforcement operations. Harris has the authority to direct and deploy CBP personnel and equipment across the South Texas corridor to execute those operations.

“The most important thing we have developed is a paradigm shift,” said Frank Longoria, acting assistant commander of planning for the South Texas Campaign.



The South Texas Campaign has built a solid foundation for growth and innovation while remaining focused on its targets to secure the South Texas corridor.

★ An integrated team composed of South Texas Campaign partners (HSI, DEA, and CBP) prepares to conduct a targeted enforcement action.

“Instead of focusing on the outputs, such as seizures and apprehensions, we are focused on the outcomes. We’re not chasing the flow, we’re chasing who controls the flow.”

The South Texas Campaign is focused on outcomes, such as apprehensions of key corridor targets, prosecutions, and convictions of major smuggling organization members. These actions disrupt and degrade the ability of the campaign’s principal targets to operate and have more lasting impact than everyday outputs such as seizures or apprehensions.

The campaign also employs a unified command concept, which includes regular face-to-face and virtual meetings with leadership from CBP and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and other law enforcement partners, such as the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration. All of the leaders receive and deliver briefings regarding ongoing South Texas Campaign operations and reach consensus regarding campaign targets.

“Participating agency leadership comes together to develop agreed-upon, focused efforts,” said Rosendo Hinojosa, chief patrol agent at CBP’s Rio Grande Valley Sector.

The unified command leadership allows field commanders the freedom to execute operations in their areas as they see fit, provided that they remain focused on their campaign targets. “It allows senior leaders to be more flexible,” said Laredo Sector Acting Chief Patrol Agent John C. Esquivel.

To further integrate intelligence, the South Texas Campaign facilitated construction of the South Texas Border Intelligence Center within the U.S. Border Patrol Laredo Sector headquarters compound. The intelligence center is a \$3.5 million, 7,000-square-foot structure that has workspace for up to 20 different law enforcement agencies. In addition to agents and officers from throughout CBP, agencies with personnel assigned to the center include FBI, DEA, Texas National Guard, Texas Department of Public Safety, Laredo Police Department and Webb County Sheriff’s Office.

The new center’s intelligence integration abilities stand out for Noel Sanchez, deputy commander of the South Texas Campaign. “In my 35 years with the U.S. Customs Service and now U.S. Customs and Border Protection, I did not see where we have had this much cooperation and collaboration to address the transnational criminal organizations,” said Sanchez. “The investigative agencies, they can see the potential and what the center can provide to help bring their investigations along.”

Michael DeBruhl, chief of staff for the South Texas Campaign, said that integration “brings to bear the full capabilities of our federal, state and local resources. It is the system working as it is designed to work; interdictors, investigators, and prosecutors achieving an outcome in confluence.”

The campaign has multiple ongoing operations in the South Texas corridor that target illegal alien and narcotics smuggling, human trafficking for slavery or prostitution, as well as southbound smuggling of weapons and unreported currency.

“When you focus on a specific target and you maintain that focus, you are taking out the cartel members who are facilitating the movement of people,” said Esquivel from the Laredo Sector. “When you start targeting these folks and being relentless, you are going to have a lot better results in terms of outcomes than outputs.”

A notable success of the South Texas Campaign's whole-of-government approach is the September 2012 arrest of 19 members of a known alien-smuggling organization associated with the Zetas, a Mexican transnational criminal organization. The case began as a two-year investigation, but the intense, integrated effort of the partner law enforcement agencies resolved the case within seven months. Sixteen cartel members pled guilty and were sentenced to a combined total of 34 years in federal prison. In addition to the arrests, three weapons, seven vehicles and approximately \$33,500 were seized during the operation.

"Cooperation and coordination among all law enforcement agencies is key to disrupting transnational criminal organizations and keeping our border communities safe," Harris stated. The arrests and prosecutions were "a perfect example of what unity of effort and a whole-of-government approach means in combatting transnational criminal organizations and ultimately keeping the American public safe," Harris added.

More recently, a campaign work group involving CBP and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services devised an information-sharing pilot program that automated the creation, management and transfer of alien files to USCIS. This change decreased required manpower for both agencies and improved national security through efficient file tracking and increased staffing to safeguard the border. The program has been expanded nationwide and will include ports of entry later in 2013.

Border Patrol agents in the Rio Grande Valley and El Paso Sectors are coordinating on the virtual processing of aliens. Virtual processing connects the two sectors, 800 miles apart, via a secure audio/video feed. Agents in El Paso interview the aliens in Rio Grande Valley and fill out the necessary paperwork. The Rio Grande Valley agents can then print the paperwork to be signed by the aliens. This allows one agent to process multiple aliens and keeps more agents on the border.

Virtual processing "makes sense because it allows CBP to deploy more agents to where the risk is greatest," said Hinojosa from the Rio Grande Valley Sector. "Additionally, virtual processing saves money because agents are not being detailed from out of sector."

An integrated outbound team of CBP officers and agents in Laredo also recently seized \$2.1 million in unreported currency hidden in a disassembled sofa. The large seizure earned the outbound team a commendation call by Acting CBP Commissioner Thomas S. Winkowski.

No easy task

The creation of the South Texas Campaign was no small feat.

In 2011, officials from CBP's three principal operational components began meeting at the Rio Grande Valley Sector headquarters to strategize the initial groundwork for the South Texas Campaign.

"I have been with the STC since its inception," said Planning Division Assistant Commander Frank Longoria. "Since the beginning, the planners understood that a core objective would have to be the integration of intelligence, targeting and analysis. The architects of the South Texas Campaign would agree with me when I say that it has far exceeded expectations."

The campaign created joint targeting teams to integrate interdiction and investigation throughout the South Texas corridor. "The teams ensure a free flow of information among various agencies and have allowed the campaign to identify the highest priority targets in its area of operations and conduct successful enforcement operations against these targets," Longoria said. "These multi-agency teams are helping to shape the future of CBP"

Laredo Director of Field Operations Eugenio Garza Jr., noted that synergy has strengthened the South Texas Campaign. "Field Operations' contribution to the campaign has been our experience in targeting people and conveyances," Garza said.

Hinojosa echoed the sentiment and noted that CBP officers and agents in the Rio Grande Valley working together in the Integrated Targeting Assistance Program have channeled their efforts to "help identify harboring methodologies and transportation structures. It has resulted in the takedown of 200 stash houses and apprehension of 4,000 aliens," Hinojosa said. "The potential for information gathering and targeting through this melding of processes is enormous. We are chipping away at the structure of the alien smuggling organizations."

Since its spring 2012 rollout, the South Texas Campaign has actively reached out to various communities, including other law enforcement agencies, local government leaders and the private sector. The campaign's outreach has touched more than 10,000 CBP employees, 200 federal, state, local and Mexican law enforcement agencies and hosted tours for top DHS, CBP and congressional leadership.

One such outreach program has yielded positive results on an emerging threat. South Texas Campaign members meet regularly with security officials from the oil and gas industry to discuss ways to enhance security for agents and workers.

With the development of the Eagle Ford shale fields, the oil and gas workers flooding the South Texas region allowed the cartels greater exploitation possibilities, including using cloned oil and gas company vehicles to circumvent established Border Patrol checkpoints.

To combat this trend, the CBP's Del Rio area team used the Integrated Frontline Resources Awareness Campaign to establish an 800 number for oil and gas workers to call to report suspicious activity. This communication vehicle helped the oil and gas industry to "become our eyes and ears out there if they see something that doesn't look right," said Chief Patrol Agent Rodolfo Karisch of CBP's Del Rio Sector. "We produced a video [regarding the 800 number] and shared it with the oil and gas industry. They are currently in the process of rolling it out to the rank and file."

In addition to the 800 number, the oil and gas industry has helped facilitate safety for law enforcement personnel in the Carrizo Springs area by training them on the hazards of hydrogen sulfide gas, which led to the purchase of gas monitoring equipment.

"We are all getting a benefit from this working relationship with the oil and gas industry. Not only are we keeping the criminal element out, but we are enhancing the safety of the agents and officers responding to an emergency situation or patrolling the areas as part of their normal duties," Karisch said.

The South Texas Campaign has built a solid foundation for growth and innovation while remaining focused on its targets to secure the South Texas corridor. "By working together, we become stronger," said Longoria. "By recognizing our strengths, we are a force to be reckoned with." ■



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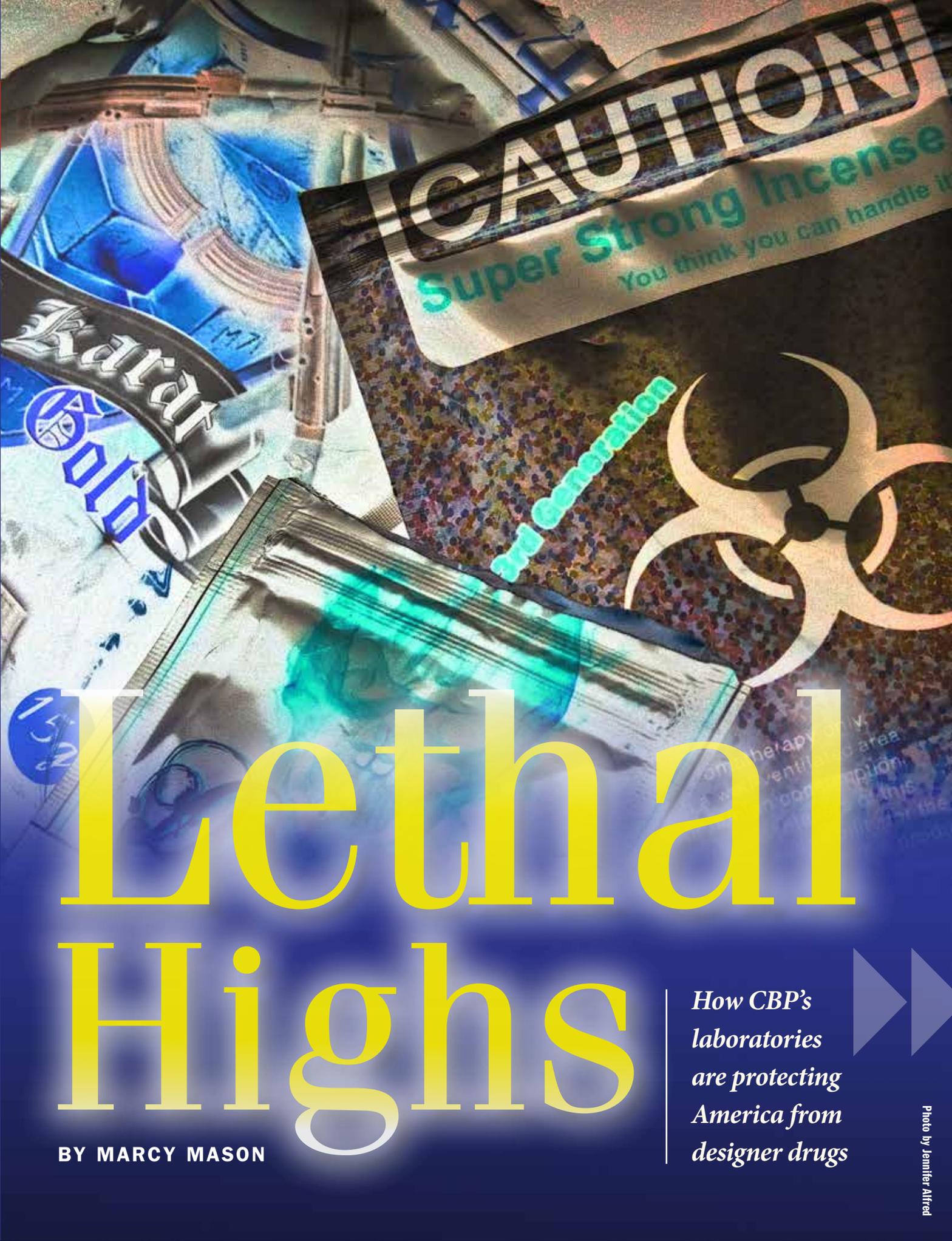


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Lethal Highs

BY MARCY MASON

*How CBP's
laboratories
are protecting
America from
designer drugs*



★ Bill Wagner, a senior chemist at CBP's Chicago laboratory, pioneered analytical techniques to identify potential designer drugs.

photo by Mary Mason

'These packets were lethal. There were three synthetics in the mix and it was a deadly combination.'

—Bill Wagner, senior chemist, CBP Chicago laboratory

me that these were mostly sedatives. So I did some research online.”

Bishop discovered that people in Europe were smoking the herbs like tobacco and getting an effect that appeared almost identical to marijuana. “People were saying they had massive, massive highs from this product and in my mind, I was thinking: ‘That’s impossible. There’s no combination of those herbs that would cause that kind of an effect,’” he said.

Furthermore, the packets were explicitly marked “not for human consumption.”

As Bishop pursued his research, his suspicions grew. He learned that there was a potent painkiller called HU-210 that produced many of the same effects as natural THC, tetrahydrocannabinol, the main mind-altering ingredient found in the cannabis plant, or marijuana. Although HU-210 had been originally developed in the late 1980s at Hebrew University in Jerusalem for medicinal benefits, the chemical had become part of a new wave of street drugs known as synthetic cannabinoids. HU-210 is extremely powerful. Bishop noted that researchers had described it as 100 to 800 times more potent than natural THC and it had much longer lasting effects.

Then, in November 2008, several large shipments, each containing 1,500 of the little Spice packets, arrived from the Czech Republic. Bishop knew something was up. As with many of the previous shipments, he sent samples to the CBP laboratory in Chicago for testing. Those had all come back negative. But this time, Bishop wanted to see if the samples contained any traces of HU-210.

The testing was slow and arduous. “I had never seen anything like this before. This was really new stuff to us,” said Bill Wagner, one of the lead scientists at CBP’s Chicago laboratory. Wagner suspected that the substance had been spray dried on plant material, and needed to be removed before any kind of analysis could be done. Once that was accomplished, Wagner spent hours using special equipment to break the substance down into separate chemical components. His initial analysis uncovered two synthetic cannabinoids. But he didn’t find any visible evidence of HU-210. So Wagner tried another type of analysis using his instrument at a higher level of sensitivity. This time, he unmasked the drug. “It was present in such small amounts I had to change my analytical technique to detect it,” said Wagner, who spent more than 10 hours testing the sample.

“These packets were lethal, Wagner said. “There were three synthetics in the mix and it was a deadly combination. I can’t imagine anybody not having bad effects after smoking that mess.”

The shipments at the DHL facility were seized and the lid was irreparably blown off of the murky world of the designer drug trade. Wagner contacted the Drug Enforcement Administration, the agency responsible for domestic enforcement of federal drug laws, to explain what the CBP lab had uncovered. In March 2009, a story about the CBP Chicago lab’s discovery was sent out as an intelligence alert in the Microgram Bulletin, a law enforcement newsletter published by the DEA to inform the forensic community about new drug-related developments. “They were the first laboratory to identify that material,” said Jill Head, the supervisory chemist for the DEA’s Special Testing and Research Laboratory Emerging Trends Program. “The material

In late 2007, not long after Steven Bishop began working as an agriculture specialist for U.S. Customs and Border Protection at the DHL express courier hub in Wilmington, Ohio, he noticed there was a steady stream of shipments listed as “herbal incense” arriving at the port. For months, the CBP officers assigned to the facility had been testing the shipments to see if they contained illicit drugs, but the results always turned up negative. There was nothing illegal about the goods, so they were released into the U.S. commerce.

The officers were perplexed. Why would anyone spend the money to express ship potpourri into the country?

Bishop, a botanist, was intrigued. He began targeting the shipments that were increasing exponentially in number. The contents were always the same. Each package contained nearly a dozen little, shiny, foil packets filled with an herbal mixture marketed under the brand name, Spice. Bishop also noticed something odd about the ingredients. “I started looking through all of the different herbs that were listed on the label,” he said. “It was pretty obvious to

that CBP analyzed was very significant to us. We had first heard about these kinds of materials back in 2006, but this was the first time that we had seen analytical results saying that an actual synthetic cannabinoid was present and added to plant material.”

Since 2009, the CBP labs have continued to be on the frontline of protecting the American public from designer drugs, a highly dangerous and deceptive group of psychoactive substances that are specifically designed to skirt around existing drug laws. With the alarming growth and sophistication of these synthetic drugs, the expertise and innovative contributions of the CBP labs are critical to keeping the country safe.

Historical perspective

Although the term “designer drugs” was coined in the 1980s, the concept of designing drugs to get around the law can be traced back to the 1920s when opiates such as morphine and heroin were banned in the U.S. Many of the current designer drugs were initially developed in the 1980s by university research laboratories and pharmaceutical companies that were trying to find cures for ailments and medical problems. One of the most noted researchers, John W. Huffman, an organic chemistry professor at Clemson University, worked with a team of scientists for more than 20 years to develop more than 400 synthetic cannabinoid compounds to aid in the research of multiple sclerosis, AIDS and chemotherapy. “All of these drugs were designed to interact with certain receptors in the brain,” said Mike McCormick, a CBP science officer at the agency’s Washington, D.C., headquarters. “The cannabinoids bind to the brain’s receptors in the same way that THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, does.”

Much to Huffman’s chagrin, his formulas were tinkered with and used as a basis to create synthetic marijuana. As early as 2004, one of Huffman’s cannabinoid compounds, JWH-018, was being sold in Europe as part of a smoking mixture intended to substitute for real marijuana. The synthetic marijuana, which sold commercially first under the brand name Spice and then under other names such as K2 or King Krypto, gave users a high, and at the same time the drug’s chemical

manipulation allowed them to pass drug tests and avoid being arrested. “The molecular change was just enough to make the chemical different,” said McCormick. “By changing the structure slightly, it creates a separately defined chemical, and therefore, it’s not listed as an illegal substance.”

Concurrently, another family of designer drugs was coming on the market. Synthetic cathinones or “bath salts” were being chemically produced from cathinone, an amphetamine-like stimulant found naturally in the khat plant. Although synthetic cathinones visually resemble bath crystals, there is no connection between the drug and the legitimate bathing product. Bath salts usually come in the form of a white or brown crystalline powder and are taken orally, inhaled or injected with a needle.

More recently, hallucinogens, another class of designer drugs, have gained popularity. Somewhat akin to LSD, hallucinogens are known for their psychedelic effects. One of the main hallucinogen drug families, called 2C, encompasses a number of psychedelic phenethylamine substances. Typically sold as a fluffy, sparkling-white powder or in tablet form, the 2C compounds were first synthesized in the 1970s and 1980s by Alexander Shulgin, an American medicinal chemist and pharmacologist.

The problems associated with this new wave of drugs are manifold. “As these molecules are altered, we don’t really know what kind of an effect they’re going to have on the brain,” said McCormick.

Unknown effects

“One of the biggest problems we have with designer drugs is how little information we have on their acute or long-term pharmacology,” said Marilyn Huestis, the chief of chemistry and drug metabolism at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a part of the National Institutes of Health based in Bethesda, Md. “To me, one of the most frightening things is that people are experimenting on themselves,” she said. “With most of these designer drugs, we don’t even have basic information. We don’t know what they do to animals. We don’t know what they do to humans. We don’t know how toxic they are. And here, you have people taking these drugs that aren’t synthesized under good manufacturing conditions,” she said. “They’re making them in clandestine labs with absolutely no cleanliness or quality control, so people don’t know what they’re putting into their bodies.”

Some effects, however, have been observed. “With the synthetic cathinones, the bath salts,” said Huestis, “there has been behavior that’s linked to violence and death.”



photo by Rand Careaga

★ Thomas Schoch, the assistant director of CBP’s San Francisco laboratory, draws structures of potential substances the CBP labs might encounter.

Similar to the adverse effects of cocaine, LSD and methamphetamine, bath salts produce an increased heart rate, extreme paranoia, hallucinations and violence, which causes users to harm themselves or others. “With the synthetic cannabinoids [fake pot], it hasn’t been proven yet that they can cause death by themselves,” said Huestis. “But there are many deaths involved with drunk driving as well as hallucinations where people think, for instance, that they can fly.”

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention put out a warning on some of the synthetic cannabinoids, specifically UR-144 and XLR-11, that those compounds are related to renal toxicity,” causing kidney failure, Huestis added. Some of the other side effects are agitation, extreme nervousness, nausea, vomiting, elevated blood pressure, tremors and seizures.

In 2010, an estimated 11,406 emergency department visits in the U.S. involved a synthetic cannabinoid, according to the DAWN Report, published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in Rockville, Md. Of these visits, 75 percent were made by patients 12-29 years of age, and 78 percent of them were male.

“Designer drugs also can be very addictive. It’s estimated that one in 10 people who try marijuana develop problematic use,” said Huestis. “But it’s been well-documented that designer drugs are up to 100 times more potent, so we know that individuals are becoming dependent on them as well.”

Molecular manipulation

Beyond these problems are the ones confronted by law enforcement. “These drugs aren’t on the controlled substance list because their chemical compositions have been tweaked a little,” said Ira Reese, the executive director of CBP’s Laboratories and Scientific Services division. A controlled substance is a drug or chemical whose manufacture, possession or use is government regulated. In the U.S., the DEA determines which substances are controlled based on how dangerous they are and their potential for abuse.

“When we find a new chemical compound, we report it to the DEA and it gets placed on the controlled substance list within 90 to 120 days,” said Reese. “But then, the molecular structure is tweaked a little bit more, which means it’s not on the list again. So it has to go through the same 90 to 120 day

process to get on the list to make it illegal.”

“On average, we see a new compound every week,” said McCormick. “It’s quite a challenge because as a drug’s molecular structure starts to change, it takes a lot of work to figure out what these substances are. This happens every time a new designer drug comes out.”

What makes designer drugs especially dangerous is the perception that they’re safe. Often marketed as legal highs, the public is led to believe that these drugs have

been tested and pose no danger. They’re camouflaged as harmless household products such as plant food, room fresheners, stain removers, toilet bowl cleaners, incense or bath salts. “Unless these drugs are prohibited, it makes it very difficult to protect the public from using them,” said Reese.

Understanding how the drugs are metabolized by the body is also important. “You need to be able to identify what the drug is,” said Huestis. “Most of our drug testing is measured in urine, but we don’t know how

photo by Jennifer Alfred

★ Neele Shepard, the lead drug chemist at CBP’s Chicago laboratory, analyzes suspected designer drugs at the international mail facility in Chicago.



these drugs are metabolized by the body,” which makes them hard to detect. Not only is this dangerous in an emergency room setting, but as Huestis noted, it’s important to be able to identify these drugs for military, athletic and law enforcement testing purposes.

Drug source

Most of the designer drugs are coming from Asia. “China and India play primary roles in the manufacture of much of this,” said Carlos Cortez, a CBP senior intelligence officer. “Most of it enters the U.S. through the West Coast at international mail centers and express courier hubs. CBP is at the forefront of intercepting these drugs and the CBP labs are critical in their identification.”

When the designer drug boom first took off in 2009, CBP officers in the field would detain suspicious looking packages, do preliminary testing and then send the samples to the labs for further analysis. “At the field level, all we are doing is trying to make an initial identification of what we have before us,” said Cortez. “Is it marijuana? Is it cocaine? Is it heroin? Is it methamphetamine or Ecstasy? We test for all of them and even if it tests negative, that still does not mean that it’s not a designer drug. It could be a synthetic cannabinoid or a synthetic cathinone, but only the lab can identify that for us.”

By 2011, the designer drug market had exploded and the labs were inundated with test samples. “We were just way overloaded. We had a huge backlog of 300 to 400 samples,” said Neele Shepard, the lead drug chemist at CBP’s Chicago laboratory. “We had a long turnaround time and we thought, ‘Why not go out to the field and screen these packages onsite? If we can identify the substances right away, it will lower the number of samples that come in. This will not only decrease our turnaround time, but we’ll be able to give the officers a quick answer.’”

So every two to three weeks, Shepard and her team travel to the ports in their region, which extends from Maine to Minnesota down to Kentucky. “They’ll set aside packages for us that they think are of interest,” she said. The CBP scientists will then test the samples using an infrared spectrometer that analyzes the substance and generates a spectrum or a unique fingerprint of the chemical. “It’s a quick process. Within 10 seconds you have a spectrum,” said Shepard. After the spectrum is collected, it’s

‘Thanks to the CBP labs’ findings, we’re able to identify the people who are involved in trafficking these drugs.’

—John Landers, CBP assistant area port director for tactical operations, Cleveland

run through a database. “We run a search and see if we get a match,” she said. If the sample requires further analysis, Shepard’s team will send it to the lab where it will undergo more testing.

Testing designer drugs is much more difficult than testing traditional drugs. “It’s very time consuming,” said Shepard. “If something comes in and it’s cocaine, that’s easy to identify. It takes two hours to analyze the sample and write it up. But with designer drugs, we might be looking at three separate pieces of data from separate pieces of equipment and you still don’t know. There’s no database to look at,” she said.

Faster analysis

To help speed up the onsite testing, the CBP labs launched a pilot in May at the DHL facility in Cincinnati. “The Chicago CBP lab scientists trained our officers on how to use some of their equipment and we’ve been turning around analysis within 24 hours,” said John Landers, CBP’s assistant area port director for tactical operations in Cleveland. “We’ll pull a sample, drop it into the spectrometer and when the reading comes out, we download it and email it to the lab. They’ll send us an email back that same day and then we’re able to reach out to our investigative arm, Homeland Security Investigations/ICE, and say, ‘We have an official lab determination. Do you want to investigate this?’”

According to Landers, on average, four out of every 10 samples are identified as a synthetic cannabinoid. “Identifying the substance in a timely manner is what’s key for a controlled delivery, where law enforcement intercepts the package and is present when the delivery is made,” he said.

A case in point happened prior to the pilot last December, when the CBP lab expedited an analysis of a suspected synthetic

drug sample targeted by an officer at the Cincinnati DHL facility. “He sent it to the lab, we identified it, and we got him a report very quickly,” said Shepard. The sample, which was manifested in the shipping documents as acrylic paint, turned out to be XLR-11, a dangerous synthetic cannabinoid.

The officer initiated a controlled delivery, which led to the discovery of a clandestine manufacturing facility in Jacksonville, Fla. There, the imported drugs were being mixed with acetone, a chemical used in nail polish remover, and sprayed on plant material that was strewn across a massive tarp on the floor of a dirty warehouse. Law enforcement agents shuttered the operation and seized more than 530 pounds of the drug-laced potpourri. They also collected 30,000 foil packets of 40 different product brands. Documents found on the premises indicated that during the two weeks the site was in operation, more than 1.1 million empty packets had been ordered. Had they been filled and sold, the retail value was estimated at more than \$40 million.

“Thanks to the CBP labs’ findings, we’re able to identify the people who are involved in trafficking these drugs,” said Landers. “That allows us to stop the importation, shut down distribution networks, and protect the public from being harmed by this material.”

Criminal convictions

Legal action results from some of the cases too. “Many times the officers send us samples and we’re able to develop evidence that can be used against people who are distributing synthetic drugs,” said Thomas Schoch, the assistant director of CBP’s San Francisco laboratory. Such was the case in July for a DEA-led investigation that resulted in the federal conviction of a Tempe, Ariz., designer drug manufacturer and distributor, Michael Rocky Lane.

'It's a worldwide epidemic. It's a very serious problem and it's not going away anytime soon.'

—Ira Reese, executive director, CBP Laboratories and Scientific Services

“We got an early indication that this person was importing things that were dangerous and could be considered controlled substances,” said Schoch. “In May 2012, a suspicious parcel was transiting through the San Francisco Air Mail Center and our CBP officers picked it up. We had a chemist on-site at the time, so he ran a quick test using our portable instrument and determined that it had the chemical signature of a cathinone,” said Schoch. “It was sent to the lab and our analyst identified the substance as alpha-PBP, a synthetic cathinone.”

The package was seized and used as evidence in the trial. “This is an example of how we were able to help stop someone who is distributing these dangerous drugs and protect the public,” said Schoch.

The CBP labs have worked with the DEA to protect the public from designer drugs in other ways. “The CBP labs often encounter a lot of compounds very early in the process, whether it’s the first time that these substances have ever been seen in the country or just very early where we may have heard of something or seen one or two instances of it showing up,” said Joshua Yohannan, a forensic chemist who works in the DEA’s Special Testing and Research Laboratory Emerging Trends Program.

Protecting the public

In terms of protecting the public, getting this data early is extremely critical, said Yohannan. “The market for these drugs is changing so rapidly that early identification is key to figuring out where the next generation of compounds is going,” he said. “A lot of the work that we do to protect the public really focuses on the identification of these materials. Realistically, nobody knows what he or she is buying in those packets. There’s no information whatsoever.”

The communication exchange between the agencies on the lab level is vital. “When CBP finds something that’s new, they let us know that they’ve seen it, and possibly could send us a portion so that we could analyze it and understand that material,” said the DEA’s Jill Head. “What that allows us to do is have the synthetic organic chemists who work here make that material if it’s not available to buy. We then have a reference to check against and can send the material to all of the DEA labs so that they can make an identification. When they make an identification, then that gives the prosecutor something to work with,” she said. “If you can’t identify the drug, then the case can’t go to trial. But if the case does go to trial and there is a conviction, that helps the public, because it opens the possibility of taking those materials off the street,” she said.

The CBP labs’ contributions go further. They participate in major sting operations

including Project Synergy, a DEA-led operation that was the largest synthetic designer drug bust in U.S. law enforcement history. The seven-month operation, which ran from December 2012 until June of this year, involved a myriad of law enforcement agencies across 35 states. Approximately 3,300 pounds of designer drugs and \$15 million in cash and assets were seized. Teams of lab personnel from CBP and DEA worked side by side at the mail facilities and express courier hubs. “We were running some tests on the substances that were found inside the packages,” said Yohannan, who was assigned to the Federal Express facility in Memphis, Tenn. The packages that appeared to contain synthetic drugs were pulled out of circulation. “They were detained by CBP and sent to the CBP laboratories for a full analysis and to make an identification,” he said.

The growth of designer drugs, however, is skyrocketing. According to the 2013 World Drug Report published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the number of new psychoactive substances is proliferating at an unprecedented rate, posing unforeseen public health challenges. “It’s a worldwide epidemic,” said Reese, who oversees the CBP labs. “It’s a very serious problem and it’s not going away anytime soon.” ■



★ Placing a suspicious sample on an infrared spectrometer, CBP Science Officer Mike McCormick tests for the latest designer drugs.

photo by Robert Helman



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THE MINISTRY OF PRESENCE

CBP chaplains provide support, training to employees

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BY ANITA KINNEY
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Supervisory Border Patrol Agent Julie Gallagher received the phone call about her brother's car crash on the evening of Sept. 2, 2010, in El Paso, Texas. By the time she was on the road to Michael Gallagher's home, she had learned that her brother, who was also a Border Patrol agent, was not expected to survive.

When she arrived that night in Casa Grande, Ariz., she was greeted by a Border Patrol chaplain who had accompanied the second in command to serve the notice of death to Michael's family. This was Julie Gallagher's introduction to Customs and Border Protection's Chaplaincy Program. Although Julie Gallagher had seen chaplains at agent funerals, she said that until Michael's death, she didn't know what chaplains did. "The chaplain that came to serve the notice of death stayed with my family throughout the year, from funeral services to candlelight vigils, in a supportive role. Sometimes he would speak on behalf of our family at different events," Julie Gallagher said. Jimmy Stout, a chaplain in the Tucson Sector, spoke at Michael's funeral. Two other chaplains,

Bob Wainwright and Kris Lindman, helped the family with other appearances, such as police memorials.

Chaplains in the Border Patrol and CBP's Office of Field Operations, or OFO, provide emotional and spiritual support to any CBP employee in any office dealing with personal challenges or crises. The CBP Chaplaincy Program is considered unique among law enforcement agencies in that all chaplains are CBP employees who take on chaplaincy as a voluntary collateral duty.

To become a chaplain, employees must go through two weeks of rigorous training. Instruction ranges from online modules and classroom sessions to interactive sessions with professional actors. These role-playing exercises help prepare chaplains for any situation they may encounter. In fact, OFO

Branch Chief/Chaplain Febe Hernandez had a situation identical to Julie Gallagher's as one of the scenarios she worked on with actors. She was profoundly affected when one of the characters in another simulation completed a suicide attempt.

"What you have to understand is that we're in the moment," Hernandez said. "There was one place where I just started to weep with the [actor], and this lady's weeping and I'm just sitting next to her holding her hand and weeping...To me it was very real; I was in the moment with her."

This training prepares chaplains to provide what OFO National Chaplaincy Program Coordinator Joshua Shorr calls "the ministry of presence." Shorr said that the goal of chaplains is "to be there for psychological first aid...and provide



★ The casket of a federal air marshal who had served in the Border Patrol is received by a Transportation Security Administration honor guard in Puerto Rico. Border Patrol Chaplain Edwin Millan, bottom left, places a flag over the casket. CBP chaplains also serve former employees and their families. “What an honor for our agents to join and be able to pay our respects in such a way,” said Millan.



★ Border Patrol Chaplain Luis Gonzalez comforts a rescued illegal migrant aboard a U.S. Coast Guard cutter.

★ CBP Field Operations Program Manager/Chaplain Joshua Shorr, right, gives the benediction at CBP’s 2013 Valor Memorial ceremony at the agency’s headquarters.



photo by Jess Denmark



photo by Donna Burton

★ CBP chaplains represent and serve frontline and mission support staff throughout the agency. From left, CBP Field Operations Branch Chief Febe Hernandez, Management Program Analyst Gloria Cruz and Border Patrol Operations Officer Shawn Hawkins are chaplains who serve in Washington, D.C.

‘Chaplains help others to find comfort, direction and peace of mind when they are otherwise unable to find it.’

— Matt Ferguson, chaplain and Border Patrol National Chaplaincy Program coordinator

emotional support and spiritual support if requested.” Whether this psychological first aid is needed in a natural disaster or as the result of everyday stress, chaplains strive to be present to the CBP employees they serve.

During their training, chaplains spend time composing and practicing eulogies, as well as completing online exercises, writing several papers and studying in small groups. The training also includes Federal Emergency Management Agency exercises, in case chaplains are called to assist in disaster scenarios.

“We provide emotional, spiritual and logistical assistance in response to all types of stresses,” said Border Patrol National Chaplaincy Program Coordinator Matt

Ferguson. CBP chaplains are trained in critical incident stress management and assist in times of tragedy by responding directly to the scene of the incident to help those affected. They also support managers when a death occurs by performing death notifications, working with employees and their families, and coordinating with the Peer Support Program (see sidebar).

Because Michael Gallagher was killed by a drunken driver, the Gallagher family was involved in a series of legal proceedings for more than a year after his death. “There was always a chaplain going to court with us,” Julie Gallagher said. “They’re just always at your side.”

Ecumenical observance

Gallagher said that the strong faith of chaplains is obvious, but that their religion was not pushed on her family. “He didn’t push ‘Mike’s in heaven’ or anything like that,” Julie Gallagher said. Although CBP chaplains must be affiliated with a practicing faith community in order to become chaplains, they are not permitted to promote their own faith views unless the employees they are working with specifically request this type of guidance.

Some CBP employees find spiritual companionship helpful. Evelyn Delaney’s husband, Border Patrol Agent David Richard Delaney from Big Bend, Texas, died on Nov. 2, 2012. Following his death, Delaney and her children worked closely with Border Patrol Agent/Chaplain Jaysun Thomas. “Prayer helped a lot. He’d say, ‘I don’t know why this is happening, I know it’s really hard to lose your husband, but you always have your friends and family and your whole Border Patrol family is always there for you.’ It’s really comforting,” said Delaney.

Chaplains are available for prayer with individuals from any religion. “One of the things we discuss in training is ecumenical prayer, so that we can pray using the terminology that we can all agree on. So for example, we’re praying to God, but not really getting beyond that,” Shorr said. “We try to pray in such a way that even if you don’t believe, you respect the intentions behind the prayer.”

Chaplains serve CBP, its employees and their families in private and public settings. When families lose an agent in the line of duty, there are a multitude of events where chaplains are available to provide support. From the funerals themselves (chaplains are trained to deliver eulogies, and Julie Gallagher found comfort with a chaplain during Michael Gallagher’s open-casket viewing) or attending police memorial services, chaplains are there to help.

The Gallagher family invited a chaplain to escort them to Police Week in Washington, D.C., as did Evelyn Delaney. Border Patrol Chaplain Jaysun Thomas escorted Delaney and her three young children to many events. “[Thomas is] very busy, but he still has a lot of time for my family. The kids have gotten so close to him. When they don’t see him... they ask me where the chaplain is. He’s just awesome,” Delaney said.

“When I can’t take it anymore, when my heart’s already exploding, I just call [Thomas], and he talks to me again, and keeps reminding me that everything’s going to be fine,” Delaney said.

Chaplains can provide resources for all members of an employee’s family. Chaplains create their own community resource index—a collection of local resources that includes secular and faith-based programs of potential interest to employees. “I can’t say that I necessarily have the answers, but as a chaplain I am able to point them in the right direction,” said Ferguson.

Supervisors occasionally call chaplains for what Shorr calls “group defusings” after

incidents that disturb the work unit or team. Chaplains and peer support members are available to “help guide the group through what they’re feeling,” Shorr said. Because chaplains have expertise in many subjects, they are available to coordinate trainings with CBP Human Resources Management. Shorr, for example works on suicide prevention trainings. “A lot of chaplains will get involved in local issues,” Shorr said, including initiatives against drunken driving and substance abuse.

Stress at home or the workplace present common reasons for seeing a chaplain.

Chaplains might direct a parent concerned about their child’s development to health

resources, confer with employees having marital difficulties or empathize with an employee who is struggling with decisions about how best to care for an aging parent. Hernandez said that she often finds herself speaking with employees about grief.

“Anything that’s going to affect the officers’ ability to function, to be at their peak, to be at their best, is going to be something that I can talk about,” said Hernandez, “that they can bring to me and we can talk about.”

“Chaplains help others to find comfort, direction and peace of mind when they are otherwise unable to find it,” said Ferguson. ■

PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM Offers Confidential Employee Aid

The Peer Support Program offers confidential assistance and support to all CBP employees and their family members in times of personal need or traumatic incidents. The Peer Support Program is staffed by CBP employees who have been trained to aid in problem management, active listening, crisis intervention and referrals to other resources. “Peer Support members volunteer for this collateral duty out of the desire to help their coworkers when a personal or work-related issue threatens to overwhelm them,” said Jesse Ramirez, program manager for the Border Patrol Chaplaincy and Peer Support programs.

By offering employees moral support and education, the Peer Support Program enables employees to make healthy, informed decisions. CBP employees also volunteer for this program, which is similar to the Chaplaincy Program, but lacks any spiritual components. Many chaplains also attend Peer Support training as a skills refresher.

More than 500 Border Patrol employees are

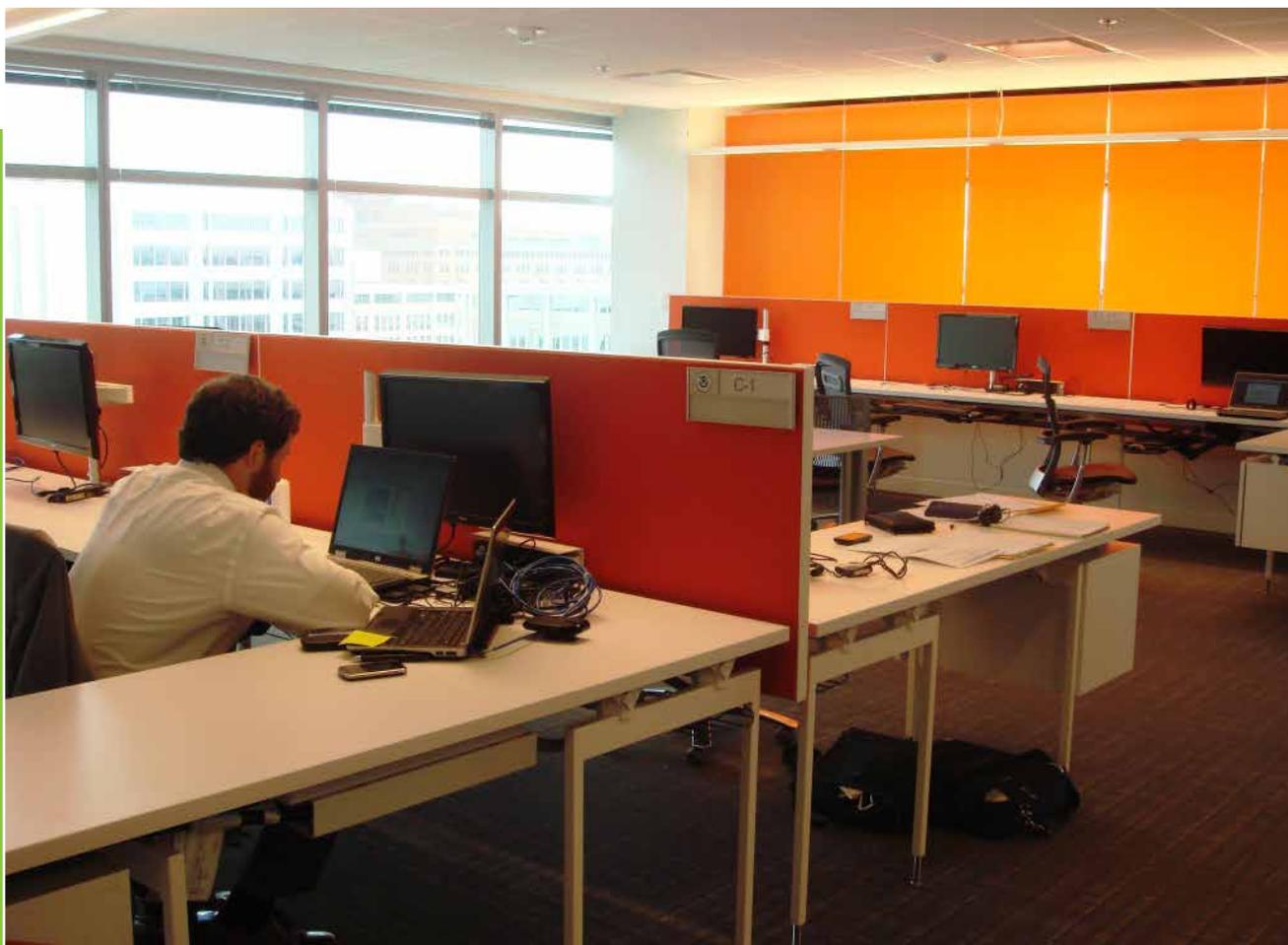
trained and active Peer Support members. The program began as an effort by the Border Patrol’s San Diego Sector to address several agent deaths that year. An employee in San Diego had heard about peer support programs in other agencies and lobbied for the Border Patrol to begin its own program to support employees. At first, the training was limited to San Diego and nearby sectors. In 2004, the Rio Grande Valley Sector (formerly the McAllen Sector) had two agent deaths, and received support from San Diego’s Peer Support members. The program went national for all CBP employees in 2005.

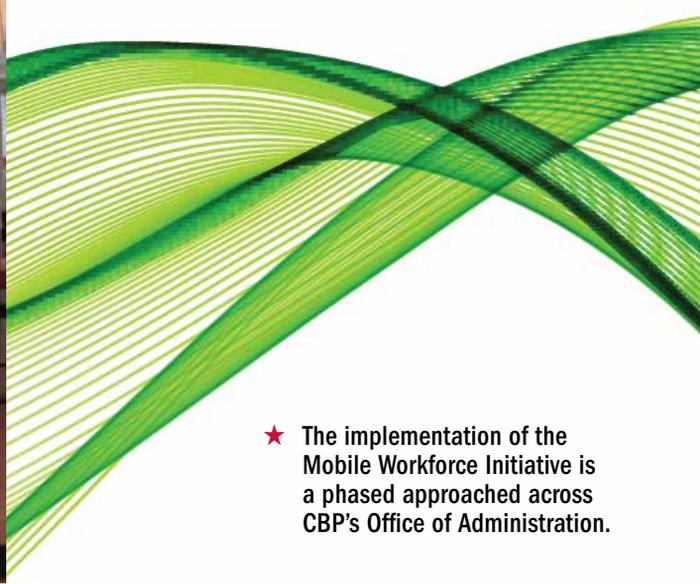
CBP’s Office of Field Operations created a national Peer Support Program in 2011 in response to employee needs at field offices and ports of entry. OFO’s approximately 100 Peer Support members, trained by the Border Patrol, are located mostly along the southern border and work in concert with OFO’s Chaplaincy Program as well as the Border Patrol’s Peer Support and Chaplaincy Programs.

CBP Goes Mobile

BY JASON MCCAMMACK

On the 9th floor of a bustling office building located at 90 K St., NE, in Washington, D.C, a transformation is taking place that could change the way CBP employees across the country do business.





★ The implementation of the Mobile Workforce Initiative is a phased approach across CBP's Office of Administration.

★ The workspace at 90 K Street is open and clearly invites collaboration among employees.



The CBP Mobile Workforce Phase I Pilot Project was launched with a few simple goals: demonstrate how a CBP mobile workforce office environment could increase employee collaboration and productivity, reduce current space usage, increase efficiencies and promote a healthier work-life balance.

The pioneers for the Mobile Workforce Pilot were the employees of CBP Office of Administration's Field Operations Facilities Program Management Office, or FOF PMO, within the Facilities Management and Engineering Directorate. These employees moved from a 13,700 square-foot office with 63 occupied workstations to a new office with only 8,700 square feet and 27 workstations. The new office represented a 36 percent reduction in square footage for the same number of employees. No longer would employees be stationed in their own cubicles. They would now share reservable workstations.

FOF PMO employees were each given the option to opt-out if they weren't comfortable with the transition to a mobile workforce environment, but zero chose to. If an employee opted out, they would have been provided an assigned union-approved cubicle within the new office.

"Our employees had such a positive

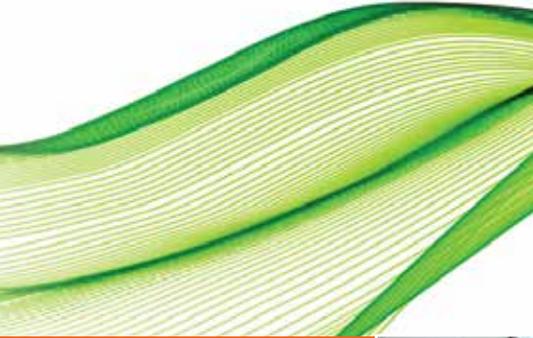
experience during the prototype period [pre-implementation] and were all very excited to see this project come to fruition. To date, we still have not had any employees opt out, all preferring the flexibility of a mobile environment to that of the former, conventional office," said Mobile Workforce Project Team Lead Anna Counihan.

The adventurous FOF PMO team transitioned to a strikingly different work environment. The buzzwords for their transition were flexibility, collaboration and mobility. Gone were their individual

workstations, replaced with open, shared workstations. Gone were individual desktop phones, replaced with more flexible solutions, including CBP BlackBerry mobile phones and a laptop-based "softphone" application (which routes their former desk phone number to their laptop) as their primary phone. Also gone were individual desktop printers, eliminated as part of the pilot program's paper reduction effort.

"I appreciate the mobility the mobile workforce technology offers. I can pick up my laptop and move around the office whether it's for a meeting or a change of scenery. The

★ The new office features a bright, sunlight-filled break room where employees can heat up and enjoy their lunch or sit down and have a cup of coffee with their colleagues.



★ Personally assigned laptops are used in the home and in the office.



technology supports my work offsite, too, and keeps me connected to my team,” said Mobile Workforce Project team member Ellie Moody.

The new office space that the team entered isn't your father's federal workspace. In fact, he would probably be shocked that anyone could get any work done here, but for the modern, federal employee, this is a dream work environment. The space is one long rectangle and the design is clean, open and clearly invites collaboration among employees. Employees share open workspaces that they reserve in advance, a practice known as hoteling. Bench-style workstations fill the center of the main work room, while taller

desks provide touchdown space for workers to stand. Four-person work tables are in the center promoting impromptu collaboration. Project rooms have sliding walls that allow small groups of three or four to meet in a comfortable space and can easily open into a large meeting room.

The lack of paper in the new office is a revelation. Digital storage and email are the norm. Instead of individual file cabinets, the new office uses a group/centralized filing system, eliminating massive amounts of unnecessary and repetitive printing.

The new office also features a bright, sun-filled break room where employees can heat up

and enjoy their lunch or sit down and have a cup of coffee with their colleagues.

Technology is a key element in making CBP's Mobile Workforce Pilot successful. Most employees now work offsite two to three days each week. The mobile workers are equipped with new laptops that allow them to stay in constant contact with their co-workers via email and video teleconferencing. When they need to go to the office they simply go online and reserve one of the shared workstations. The personally-assigned laptops they take home with them are the same they use when they arrive at the office.

‘Technology is the bedrock that upholds the mobile work environment. It enables managers and staff to accomplish their work, exchange information and stay connected beyond the confines of the traditional office setting.’

–Trent Frazier, director, Field Operations Facilities Program Management Office

“Technology is the bedrock that upholds the mobile work environment. It enables managers and staff to accomplish their work, exchange information and stay connected beyond the confines of the traditional office setting,” said FOF PMO Director Trent Frazier.

The technology required to make all this happen made training the pilot project employees a top priority for the pilot program management. Each employee was given personal instruction on how to set up a home workstation and use their new tools to ensure office collaboration and efficiency was not only maintained, but expanded.

The results for the team in their new mobile work environment have been striking. Pilot program managers identified clear and measurable benefits, including:

- reduced office footprint and rent costs
- government savings for supply orders and travel costs
- hard file storage decrease of 66 percent
- 15 percent increase in virtual communications
- 100 percent increase in team collaboration
- increased continuity-of-operations resiliency and readiness
- 100 percent increase in employee satisfaction with technology and office environment
- \$600 per employee average annual savings on commuting costs through a 52 percent reduction in commuting miles. This also resulted in a 46.7 percent reduction in greenhouse gases created by Facilities Management and Engineering commuters.

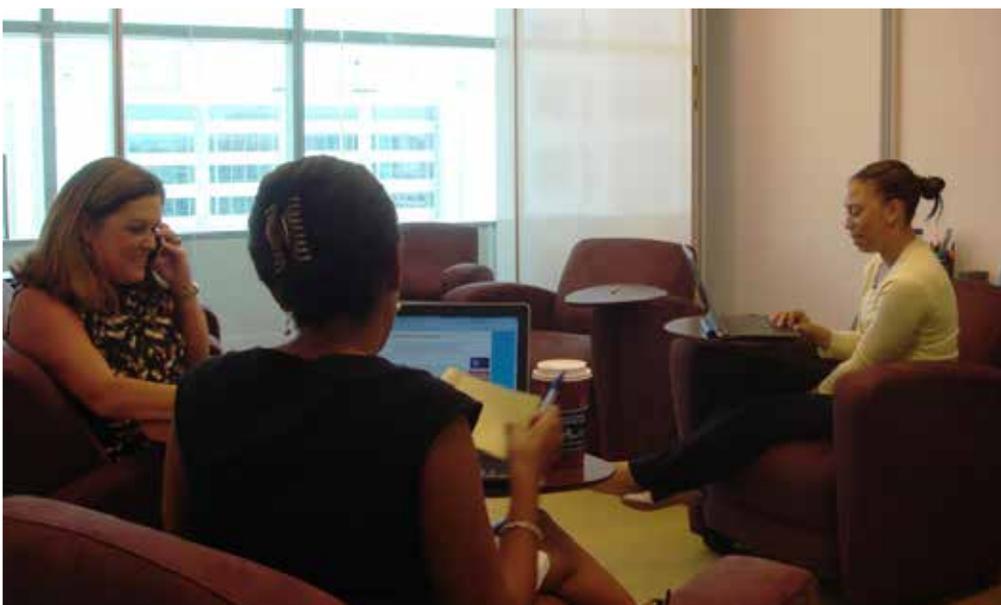
CBP expects to recover the \$1.5 million in initial investments for the pilot program, e.g., equipment, construction, training and furniture, in just over two years, primarily due to the savings in rent and operating costs. The projected recurring annual savings after the first two years for this single office space is more than \$300,000.

“Mobile Workforce has allowed me to experience a better quality of life. I have eliminated four hours per day of travel to and from work. This has allowed me to be more efficient and effective in my work and has allowed me to be more accessible to my co-workers. Additionally, it has allowed me to spend more time with my family and that is the most important thing in my life,” said Office of Administration Analyst Dave Bowers.

The implementation of the Mobile Workforce Initiative is a phased approach across CBP’s Office of Administration. Phase II of the effort includes the transition of all D.C.-based OA offices to a mobile workforce environment, focusing primarily on OA’s National Place locations.

To support the future mobile work environment and enable CBP to achieve its efficiency improvement goals, emphasis will be on facilities enhancements, including office and warehouse consolidations, as well as expanding the use of technology and adapting employees’ work practices. Mobile Workforce Phase II will be implemented using best practices identified from the pilot project’s first phase. ■

- ★ Project rooms have sliding walls that allow small groups of three or four to meet in a comfortable space and can easily open into a large meeting room.



Counterfeit Crackdown

Teaming with China Customs to seize fake electronics

In a first-of-its-kind operation, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and China Customs teamed up to seize more than 243,000 fake electronic devices. The confiscated items included items bearing logos from Apple, BlackBerry, Beats by Dr. Dre, Samsung and Sony. The success of the joint operation, conducted in March and April, signaled a new era in the crackdown on Chinese counterfeiters.

“The theft of intellectual property is a global problem and cross-border efforts are needed to fight it. CBP looks forward to a continued partnership with China in confronting this critical trade issue,” said CBP Acting Commissioner Thomas S. Winkowski. “Robust enforcement of intellectual property rights allows innovators and creators—whether in a small start-up or an international corporation—to profit from

their efforts, and gives consumers confidence in the products they buy.”

CBP signed an initial memorandum of understanding on intellectual property rights, or IPR, with the Chinese in 2007, though progress was slow in putting the agreement to work. In 2012, however, Vice Minister Zou Zhiwu of China’s General Administration of Customs announced a clear commitment to enforce IPR in China. “IPR infringement is a global issue involving not only the process of production and export, but also that of import and circulation. It not only harms the order of global trade, but also threatens the health and safety of consumers,” Zhiwu said.

The U.S. welcomed the increased Chinese commitment to action. Products from China accounted for 72 percent of the value of IPR infringing products seized in 2012, according to CBP statistics.

Therese Randazzo, director of CBP IPR policy and programs, viewed

the Chinese announcement as a “window of opportunity,” and quickly began work with Anne Maricich, assistant trade director of the CBP Los Angeles Field Office, to develop a joint IPR operation with China.

Randazzo and Maricich visited China in early 2013, reviewing counterfeit seizure trend data with China Customs officials. One product category was selected for joint enforcement action: fake electronics. CBP and China Customs agreed to mount a joint seizure operation for four types of electronics: cell phones, batteries, headphones and power cables with counterfeit UL labels.

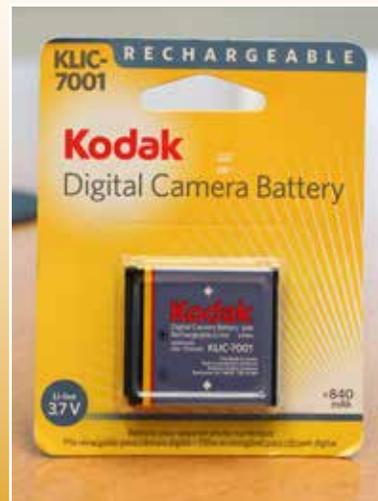
In the final phase of planning, CBP and China Customs met with electronics manufacturers to receive updates on piracy activities and characteristics of the latest products masquerading as the real thing. Manufacturers also provided targeting intelligence resulting in close attention to shipments consigned at Guangzhou and Shenzhen, where many pirate factories operate.

The operation kicked off March 15 at express carrier hubs and mail facilities in the U.S. and China. In the past, counterfeiters



photo by Donna Burton

★ When loaded into a computer, this fake language program transmitted any stored personal and financial information to a foreign website.



★ Fake batteries like these have ruined devices and even burst into fire.

photo by Donna Burton

shipped goods in large containers, resulting in larger and larger seizures at the U.S. border. Counterfeiters shifted tactics and switched to selling goods online directly to buyers in the U.S., using express delivery and mail services.

Acting on CBP targeting intelligence and tips from China Customs, CBP searched for fake electronics at U.S. ports including Anchorage, Alaska, Cincinnati and Los Angeles. At the same time, China Customs seized counterfeit products consigned to express shippers in Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai and Shenzhen. The joint operation ended on April 15.

According to Randazzo, the operation resulted in 1,735 seizures, with Cincinnati and Beijing ranking at the top for confiscations in the U.S. and China. The U.S. and Chinese shared information on each seizure as it happened, in real time. “With the number of seizures and the time difference with China, the most difficult part of the operation was coordinating things as seizures were reported,” said Randazzo. When the operation ended, CBP reported nearly 700 seizures—China Customs reported more than a thousand.

How did the quality of the seized goods compare to the real thing? Maricich described her experience with a pair of fake Beats by Dr. Dre headphones. “They looked almost the same, but you could tell the difference as soon as you put the fake headphones on your head. The fake headphones were not as comfortable, and the difference in sound quality was obvious,” Maricich said.

The operation resulted in an arrest in the New Orleans area of a U.S. citizen who repeatedly imported counterfeit Beats by Dr. Dre headphones, which he then sold on Craigslist. The arrest was based on a China Customs tip to CBP and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations, which coordinated with the Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office on the arrest.

Items seized by CBP during the operation will be forfeited and most will eventually be destroyed. Counterfeit goods seized by China Customs will be handled in accordance with Chinese law.

CBP expects to conduct future joint operations with China. The operation was “the beginning of a good dialogue with the Chinese. As China generates more innovation in their own country, they are going to want to protect their trademarks

*‘The results of this joint operation are very inspiring and have **consolidated our confidence and resolve to jointly fight against IPR violations.**’*

—Vice Minister Zou Zhiwu of China’s General Administration of Customs

and copyrights. China is coming to the realization of this and the need for IPR enforcement,” observed Maricich.

“The success of this joint operation fully proves that earnest and effective cooperation across the border is needed to curb the movement of counterfeit products,” said Vice Minister Zhiwu. “The results of this joint operation are very inspiring and have consolidated our confidence and resolve to jointly fight against IPR violations.”

In spite of “increased enforcement efforts, problems with counterfeiting in China remain widespread,” according to an April report from the U.S. Trade Representative. “A partial list of commonly counterfeited goods includes food and beverages; apparel, footwear, and accessories; consumer electronics, computers and networking equipment; entertainment and business software; batteries, chemicals, appliances; and auto parts.” ■

—David Long



photo by Donna Burton

★ This imitation cell phone came with a charger that smoked when plugged in and a charging cord that did not connect to the phone.

Preventing **Wireless Anarchy**

Customs officials regulate the airwaves during the dawn of radio

For the 30 years of radio communication that followed Guglielmo Marconi's wireless transmission between stations in 1896, customs officials worked in partnership with the Bureau of Navigation to regulate the use of the airwaves. From the establishment of protocols for ship-to-shore communications to assigning call letters to stations to licensing radio operators and ensuring neutrality of the airwaves during the advent of World War I, customs officials were the frontline of implementing procedures that enabled clear communications via radio.

During the last years of the 19th century, radio transmissions revolutionized

communication by allowing telegraphy from almost anywhere. Its possibilities captured the popular imagination. And since messages were transmitted on public airwaves, they were easily intercepted or interrupted. Indeed, students at the Marconi School of Wireless Telegraphy learned their trade by listening in and transcribing ship-to-shore transmissions.

In addition, the creation of radio devices to transmit and receive messages was cheap, and the equipment was easy to operate. This quickly led to a clogging of the airwaves. This situation was summarized in an article originated in the New York Herald

and republished in newspapers across the country that stated:

The apparatus for imparting impulses to the air was easily and cheaply acquired. A \$2 induction coil, a small staff, a little wire for antennae . . . There are thousands of low power sets scattered through the eastern country . . . which are a means of annoyance, if not of menace, to vessels at sea.

And it was the communications with ocean-going ships that first involved customs officials in enforcing regulations for radio transmissions.

1902

- ★ The introduction of wireless telegraphy enabled communications from virtually everywhere. The U.S. Signal Corps used pack mules to carry their radio equipment to remote locations.



photo from George Grantham Bain Collection, Library of Congress, date unknown

- ★ Students at the U.S. Naval Academy constructing a wireless apparatus illustrate the popularity of the technology among the youth during the early 20th century. Local YMCAs and youth camps also sponsored classes in wireless telegraphy operation.



photo by Frances Benjamin Johnston, Library of Congress, ca. 1902

1911



- ★ Future Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was one of the passengers on a stranded ship whose radio distress signals were not picked up by other vessels. When he returned to Washington, he lobbied for more stringent regulation of radio communications.

Congress gave this role to collectors of customs in the Radio Act of 1910, which also required a wireless apparatus and radio communication on ocean-going freighters with 50 or more crew and passenger ships. The regulations were to be developed by the Bureau of Navigation and “enforced by collectors of customs and other officers of the government.” Customs officers were the logical choice for this duty since they routinely boarded incoming ships and had a large presence at the major ports. After the enactment of this law, customs officials expanded their duties to ensure that both outgoing and incoming ships had the appropriate radio equipment and operators.

But this law did not provide for consistent radio operations while at sea. Ships generally employed a single operator, so messages could only be sent or received when the operator was on duty. The issue with this practice was after-hours emergencies. Two incidents at sea led to greater regulation and a larger role for customs officials.

On Nov. 23, 1911, the steamer Prinz

Joachim ran aground on a reef in the Bahamas. Its radio operator sent distress signals that were received by land stations, but were not picked-up by nearby ships because their operators were off duty. Onboard the stranded ship was the prominent politician and future Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, who started lobbying Congress to require continuous staffing of onboard radio stations while at sea. Within six months of this incident, the H.M.S. Titanic sank. Its distress calls were missed by a nearby ship because the radio operator had gone off duty.

The international community was outraged, and the U.S. Congress responded with the Radio Act of 1912, broadening the role of customs officials and the Bureau of Navigation in the regulation of radio. The act was both a response to recent sea catastrophes and to the growth of radio usage worldwide. The powers of the act were supplemented in 1913 with a law that dealt with “preventing or minimizing interference with communication” between public and private stations. Both acts

specified that collectors of customs were to enforce the law.

The Radio Act provided for radio inspectors from the Bureau of Navigation to be stationed in nine districts that collectively covered the U.S. The district headquarters were primarily located in customhouses. The radio inspectors shared duties with customs officers. While there was no distinct division of labor, most customs officers concentrated on the regulation of commercial and shipping communications. The radio inspectors monitored airwaves for unauthorized interference, provided licensing examinations for amateur and commercial operators and, when available, accompanied customs officials to inspect radio equipment onboard ships.

The extent of this symbiotic relationship between customs officials and radio inspectors is illustrated by production of Radio Service Bulletins by the Bureau of Navigation. These bulletins provided updates to regulations and pertinent information

1912

1915



photo by Underwood and Underwood, Library of Congress

★ Students at the Marconi Wireless School in New York transcribe the messages from the shipping traffic in 1912.

★ Dudley Field Malone served as the collector of customs for New York from 1913 to 1917. He was responsible for implementing President Woodrow Wilson’s executive order for neutrality of the radio airwaves at the Port of New York.



★ Front page of the first issue of the Radio Service Bulletin, January 1915. Published by the Bureau of Navigation in the Department of Commerce, the bulletins describe changes in regulations, additions of stations and other pertinent information used by radio operators and by customs officials that enforced federal regulations relating to wireless transmissions.

ranging from the listing of call letters for new stations to the change of ownership of stations from Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company to the Radio Corporation of America. It is significant that the leading page of each bulletin addresses “collectors of customs, radio inspectors and others concerned.”

Unfortunately, unrest in Europe would break into war and thereby change the role of customs officials. To ensure neutrality of the airwaves, President Woodrow Wilson issued an executive order relating to the radios for ocean-going ships. As of Jan. 1, 1915, radio equipment on “ships of belligerent countries” was disconnected while they were docked in U.S. ports or in the waters outside the ports. Customs officials’ role in this process was described in a “Report of War Work at the Port of New York” in the chapter titled “Neutrality Period”:

All merchant vessels flying the flag of a belligerent country...were required to lower the antenna of the radio installation to deck and to disconnect it from the radio station of the ship. The receiving and transmitting apparatus

was sealed by an Inspector of Customs until December, 1915; after that date, the sealing was affected by a naval officer...The antenna was required to remain lowered and disconnected and the apparatus to remain sealed during the time the vessel remained within the limits of the port. Permission to hoist and connect the antenna and to break the seals in order to have the radio installation in operating condition was obtained from the Collector.

When the U.S. entered into World War I, much of radio regulation enforcement activities was temporarily transferred to the U.S. Navy.

The war also meant a suspension of all amateur licenses. But soon after hostilities ceased, amateur licenses could be reinstated. An article in the June 1919 issue of the *Electrical Experimenter* advised all amateur operators who wanted their licenses reinstated to contact the “Custom House of Your District for Further Particulars.” This article also described an innovation in radio that would lead to changes in customs

officials’ role in regulation enforcement. During the war years, radio had gone from transmitting Morse code to the broadcast of voice and sound:

And wonder upon wonder! When we put our sets away two years ago we were accustomed to hear nothing but the crisp dots and dashes in flute-like, staccato sounds...But the war has changed everything—even radio, for now the *radio telephone* has come into its own...the ether is now filled with the human voice flung far and broad over the land—nay, over the oceans...

Soon most newspapers had a daily feature like the *Evening World’s* “Radio Phone Service” column that listed broadcasts of concerts, public speeches and church services. These columns also addressed the amateur operators, advising them to secure their licenses by addressing the radio inspector at the customhouse in the district.

1917

- ★ Helen Campbell was the first wireless operator for the National League for Women’s Service, an auxiliary organization that worked in conjunction with the American Red Cross during World War I. In this period before woman’s suffrage, the position of wireless operator was one of the few professions where females had equal footing. The regulations governing radio communication from 1913 stated, “Women are eligible as applicants for licenses of any class or grade upon the same conditions as men.”



photo from George Grantham Bain Collection, Library of Congress, 1917

1921



- ★ Dai Buell broadcasts a piano performance over the airwaves in 1921. The expanded use of radio for entertainment leads the government to diminish the role of customs officials in the enforcement of regulations and to establish the Federal Radio Commission.



From Wireless Telegraphy to Commercial Radio

As the commercial radio broadcast became more prevalent, overall responsibility for the regulation of the airwaves transitioned to the U.S. Commerce Department. Its secretary during the 1920s was future U.S. President Herbert Hoover, who organized annual conferences to secure cooperation among amateur, commercial and entertainment stations and communications networks. When his cooperative ventures foundered and his attempt to regulate the radio airwaves by reducing the number of licenses was blocked by the courts, Congress stepped in and created the Federal Radio Commission in 1927 to oversee the regulation of the airwaves. This commission was replaced by the Federal Communications Commission in 1932. ■

—David D. McKinney, Ph.D.
Chief Historian



1925

★ Former Customs Collector Dudley Field Malone and Former Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan occupy another milestone in radio broadcast history for their roles in the infamous “Monkey Trial.” The 1925 trial of John T. Scopes for teaching evolution was the first ever to be broadcast live. Bryan headed the prosecution with Malone serving as co-counsel for the defense with Clarence Darrow. Pictured in front of the WGN microphone is Malone with Bryan, Judge John Raulston and Darrow.

- 1896** Guglielmo Marconi sends messages between stations without a hard-wire connection.
- 1910** Act to require apparatus and radio communication on certain steamers requires certain ocean-going ships to have radio equipment when visiting U.S. ports. Section 5 states that the secretary of commerce and labor makes regulations that are enforced “by collectors of customs and other officers of the government.”
- 1911** Bureau of Navigation in the Commerce and Labor Department is charged with establishing regulations for wireless telegraphy.
- 1911** The steamer Prinz Joachim strikes a reef in the Bahamas. Radio calls are received by land stations, but ships do not respond because radio operators are off duty. The future Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was on board and pushes for legislation to require more radio operators on ships.
- 1912** The ocean liner Titanic sinks and rescue efforts are delayed because distress signals are missed by ships whose radio operators were not on duty.
- 1912** Radio Act of 1912 (Public Law 238) requires auxiliary power supply for radios and presence of two or more operators for passenger ships and ships with 50 or more crew. The act establishes nine districts for the regulation of radio apparatus and transmission. Regional radio inspectors from Commerce Department are located at customhouses. The law also requires radio operators to be licensed.
- 1913** An Act to Regulate Radio Communication (Public Law 264) Section 4 states, “That for the purpose of preventing or minimizing interference with communication between stations...said private and commercial stations shall be subject to the regulation of this section. These regulations shall be enforced by the Secretary of Commerce and Labor through the collectors of customs.”
- 1914** American Radio Relay League connects the various 200 amateur radio clubs and stations from coast to coast.
- 1914** Department of Commerce announces the establishment of radio call letters.
- 1914** President Woodrow Wilson issues an executive order for neutrality of wireless transmission. Customs officials enforce order for ocean-going ships.
- 1915** David Sarnoff proposes “radio music boxes” in a memo. The memo anticipates the creation of radio broadcasts for entertainment.
- 1915** Ships of belligerent countries are prohibited from using radio while in U.S. waters or ports. Their equipment is sealed by customs officials when in ports.
- 1917** The U.S. enters World War I and restricts radio transmissions. Amateur licenses are suspended.
- 1919** The U.S. lifts restrictions on receiving stations following the cessation of hostility.
- 1919** General Electric, Westinghouse and AT&T form the Radio Corporation of America.
- 1921** First coverage of presidential elections and broadcast of the World Series baseball games.
- 1922** Commerce Secretary Herbert Hoover convenes the first National Radio Conference.
- 1922** Stations licensed by the Commerce Department broadcast farm reports produced by the Department of Agriculture.
- 1925** The Scopes “Monkey Trial” is broadcast live.
- 1926** National Broadcasting Company is established to provide programming via radios.
- 1927** Federal Radio Commission is established to regulate the airwaves.
- 1932** Federal Radio Commission is abolished and functions transferred to Federal Communications Commission by Executive Order 5892.



Shoes Conceal \$64,000 in Cocaine

Salton City, Calif. – El Centro Sector Border Patrol agents apprehended a suspected narcotics smuggler at the Highway 86 checkpoint and seized over two pounds of cocaine hidden in her shoes. The cocaine had an estimated street value of \$64,000. The suspect, vehicle, and narcotics were turned over to the Drug Enforcement Administration for further investigation.

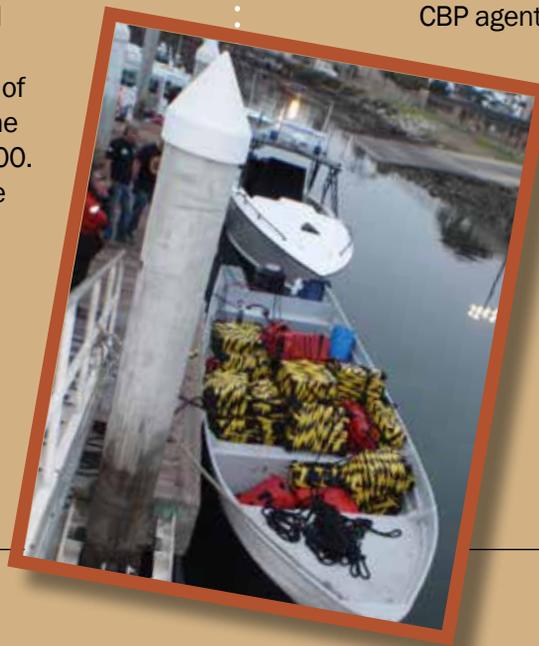
Coke Bust-Up in Pine Valley

Pine Valley, Calif. – Border Patrol agents apprehended a man at the Interstate 8 checkpoint near Pine Valley, Calif., with cocaine in his vehicle. Agents encountered a 21-year-old male Mexican national driving a 2008 Honda Civic as it arrived at the checkpoint. A Border Patrol canine alerted to the vehicle and the Civic was referred for a secondary inspection. Agents requested and received permission to search the vehicle and discovered 28 bundles of cocaine hidden behind the vehicle's rocker panels. The bundles weighed 70.20 pounds and had an estimated street value of \$772,200.

Marijuana-Laden Panga Caught off California Coast

Laguna Beach, Calif. – CBP Air and Marine agents on Aug. 6 seized a panga boat off the La Jolla coastline filled with 38 bales of marijuana with an estimated street value of more than \$4.1 million.

CBP agents aboard an aircraft detected the panga traveling without navigational lights. Agents arrested two Mexican nationals after discovering the drugs. CBP turned the men and marijuana over to Immigration and Customs Enforcement special agents in San Diego.





Illegally Imported Land Rover Destroyed in Baltimore

Baltimore – An illegally imported unsafe Land Rover seized by CBP officers last April was destroyed in spectacular fashion at a Maryland salvage yard on Aug. 13. It was one of dozens stopped in recent months at ports of entry in Philadelphia, Norfolk, Va., Charleston, S.C., Savannah, Ga., Jacksonville, Fla., Houston and Tacoma, Wash. Alerts from CBP's Commercial Targeting and Analysis Center, which protects America from unsafe imported products, led to the seizures. Officers discovered that the vehicle was missing airbags and violated other federal highway safety standards.



Assault Rifles Bound for Mexico Seized

Del Rio, Texas – CBP officers at the Del Rio port of entry on Aug. 2 arrested a Del Rio man after finding three assault rifles, one handgun and multiple rounds of ammunition hidden in his Mexico-bound car. The driver was turned over to Homeland Security Investigations for federal prosecution.

Magic Mushroom Trip Ends with CBP Philadelphia Arrest

Philadelphia – Apparently the mushrooms didn't pack enough magic to keep a Philadelphia man from tripping off to jail. CBP officers arrested Gregory Corbin Jr. on Aug. 4 at Philadelphia International Airport for possessing nearly 73 grams of psilocin mushrooms and a little more than half a gram of marijuana that he brought back from Amsterdam. CBP officers discovered the small container of psychedelic mushrooms during a secondary agriculture examination. Corbin was turned over to the Tinicum Township Police Department for prosecution.



Destructive Stowaway Discovered in Chicago Rice Shipment

Chicago – On July 26, CBP agriculture specialists at the Chicago port of entry discovered a suspected khapra beetle in a sea container containing 1,027 bags of rice from Pakistan. The U.S. Department of Agriculture later confirmed the shipment contained the khapra beetle, which is one of the world's most destructive pests.

The shipment was denied entry into the U.S. even though a Pakistani sanitary certificate said the shipment was free from the khapra beetle.



RESOURCES

NEED ANSWERS?

CBP has more than 600 answers to your most frequently asked questions, as well as a few that aren't so common. Please use this page to research the information you need. If you do not find it, or have additional questions, contact CBP.

<https://help.cbp.gov> or call (877) 227-5511 or (202) 325-8000.

U.S. PORTS OF ENTRY

Locate a Port of Entry – Air, Land, or Sea.

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/toolbox/contacts/ports/

TRAVEL INFORMATION

CBP provides helpful information about the entry process, travel program and more for U.S. citizens and international visitors.

www.cbp.gov/travel

Trusted Traveler Programs

For expedited travel for air and land border crossing, enroll in one of the following programs.

- Air travel – www.globalentry.gov
- Northern land border crossing – cbp.gov/nexus
- Southern land border crossing – cbp.gov/sentri

For international Visa Waiver Travelers

Electronic System for Travel Authorization

<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>

TRADE INFORMATION

CBP provides information and resources to the trade community about basic importing and exporting, cargo security and more.

www.cbp.gov/trade

CAREERS WITH CBP

If you are interested in a career with CBP, check out the “Careers” website for more information.

www.cbp.gov/careers

HELPFUL WEBSITES:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security – www.dhs.gov

DHSTRIP – www.dhs.gov/trip

U.S. Customs and Border Protection – www.cbp.gov

Transportation Security Administration – www.tsa.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency – www.fema.gov

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

- I-551, Permanent Resident Card (“Green Card”) – www.uscis.gov

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement – www.ice.gov

United States Coast Guard – www.uscg.mil

U.S. State Department

- Passports – www.travel.state.gov/passport
- Visas – www.travel.state.gov/visa
- Visa Waiver Program – www.travel.state.gov/visa
- Cultural property – www.exchanges.state.gov

United States Department of Agriculture/APHIS

- Traveler Information – www.aphis.usda.gov/travel
- Importing Agricultural Items – www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export